

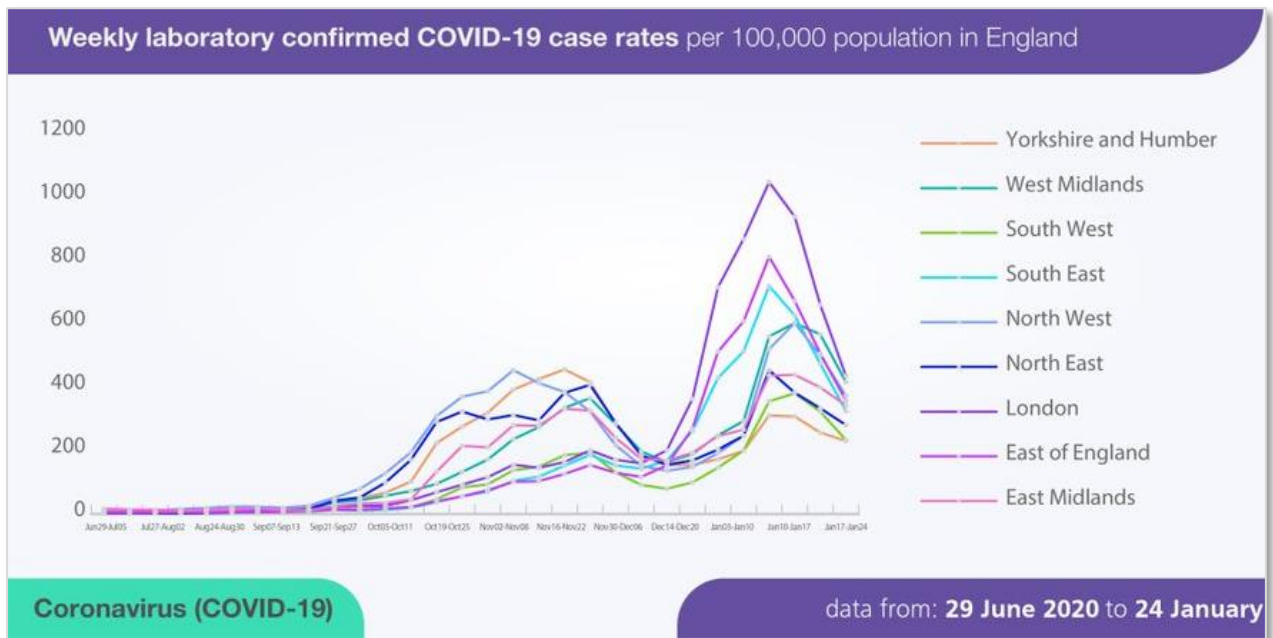


Protecting and improving the nation's health

**Key Messages for London's Faith and CVS groups  
(Updated 01/02/2021)**

London has been hit hard by the second wave of the pandemic and we need to continue to do all we can to help drive down spread of infections.

As a result of the national lockdown, the proportion of cases (compared to the population) has fallen in all regions of England. However, London continues to have the highest rates.



NHS services in London are still under immense pressure and, as of 22 January, an average of 589 people were being admitted to our hospitals every day. To see the latest data on COVID-19 (including daily statistics for your local area), please see [here](#).

Staying at home is still the single most important thing that Londoners can do over the coming weeks to help drive down the rate of infections and reduce hospital admissions and deaths. When people do need to go out for the reasons allowed, it is important that they continue to follow the basics of washing their hands regularly, wearing a face covering where appropriate and keeping social distance from others.

An effective vaccine is the best way to protect people from coronavirus and will save thousands of lives. Following extensive safety trials and authorisation by the independent regulator, the MHRA, effective COVID-19 vaccines are available in the UK for free.

It is important to note that urgent care is still available during the national lockdown and that leaving home to access medical care is allowed. GPs are providing more appointments, including evenings and weekends, for patients with urgent health needs.

## Testing

Around 1 in 3 people with COVID-19 don't have any symptoms (are asymptomatic). Community testing of asymptomatic people has now been expanded to include London. This will help to identify and isolate individuals who have COVID-19 but do not have symptoms and may be unknowingly spreading the virus.

Local 'rapid tests' provide results within 40 minutes and are available for free. Testing sites for people without symptoms are being rolled out across London and they are available in places such as schools, universities, some workplaces and local councils. Many local councils are prioritising people who cannot work from home and still need to go out for work – key workers, carers, tradespeople and essential retail workers – who need a quick result and regular testing. Rapid testing arrangements, including site locations and opening times are being promoted locally by every London council. People can contact their local council, employer or place of study to find out more and more information on these tests can be found [here](#).

People who have symptoms of COVID-19 or have been asked to get a test to confirm a positive result can book a free NHS test [here](#).

## Vaccine roll out

Vaccines are quite simply the most effective way to prevent infectious disease. Most of us, including our children and wider families, have already had at least one, and they are responsible for stopping up to three million deaths worldwide every year.

More than 2,000 vaccination sites have already been set up across the UK and hundreds more are opening soon to help those who are most at risk from COVID-19 to access vaccines for free, regardless of where they live.

Last week the NHS in England vaccinated 200 people every minute.

4.9 million of the most vulnerable and those who care for them have already received their first dose.

We all have an important part to play to help the NHS:

- Please do not contact the NHS to seek a vaccine, the NHS will contact you;
- When you are contacted, please attend your appointments

And if the vaccine is going to be effective, we need as many people to step forward as possible. Doing so means protecting ourselves, our parents, our grandparents, even our children from the impact of this deadly virus. It is a choice that we are very fortunate to have.

There is [information available about the NHS COVID-19 vaccination programme](#) including an [easy-read guide to coronavirus and vaccinations](#).

Even when people have had the COVID-19 vaccine, it is important that they continue to follow national restrictions. We do not yet know if the vaccine prevents transmission - they could potentially still carry and transmit the virus to other vulnerable people, even if they are protected.

We know the COVID-19 vaccine is our best route back to normal life but we still have a long way to go, and the basics of Hands, Face, Space will remain important for some time to come.

## Useful resources

National lockdown and stay at home guidance

- Lockdown information in Bengali, Gujarati, Polish, Romanian, Turkish and Somali: translated [WhatsApp audio clips](#)
- [National lockdown: Stay at Home](#) (Cabinet Office): detailed guidance on the national lockdown
- [Stay at home](#) guidance for households with possible coronavirus (COVID-19) infection

Places for worship, religious services and gatherings

- [Safe use of places for worship and special religious services and gatherings](#)

Vaccines

- [General information provided by the NHS on the safety and importance of vaccines](#)
- [Video message](#) on vaccine safety for BAME communities
- [Social media statics on vaccines in Arabic, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Punjabi \(Indian and Pakistani\), Polish, Slovak, Somali and Urdu](#)
- [Vaccination campaign resources](#)
- [Mary Ramsey, Head of Immunisation](#) (explainer video)

General COVID-19 resources

- [Find out what support people can get](#) if you're affected by COVID-19, for example, if they're out of work, need to get food, or want to take care of their mental health.
- [COVID-19 resources in your language](#): guidance and advice in various languages on topics such as health and wellbeing, employment and welfare, domestic abuse, housing and homelessness
- [Doctors of the World](#) have provided translated resources into 60 languages aimed at migrants and asylum seekers which are informed by government and NHS advice.

People with no recourse to public funds (NRPF)

- [This tool](#) gives information about where migrant families can get help with housing and financial support when they have no recourse to public funds (NRPF).

Migrant Health

- [This resource](#) provides advice and guidance for healthcare practitioners on the health needs of migrant patients and has been updated to include a summary of changes after the Brexit transition period and information on COVID-19 vaccination.

Mental Health

- [Coping with mental health problems during coronavirus](#): support if someone is experiencing mental health problems such as obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or bipolar disorder.
- [Accessing mental health treatment and support during coronavirus](#): advice on getting medication, tips for online therapy and using care services, and other ways to access treatment and support for mental health.
- The [NHS Volunteers Service](#) provide a telephone 'check in and chat' if someone has mental health issues and are feeling isolated due to shielding, have a long term condition, are self-isolating or have caring responsibilities. Call 0808 196 3646 (8am to 8pm, 7 days a week) or visit the [website](#).

## COVID-19 posters and social media resources

- The [PHE campaign resource centre](#) contains a collection of useful public health messaging resources for coronavirus: